

NATIONAL SCIENCE FOUNDATION

OFFICE OF INSPECTOR GENERAL

Performance Plan Fiscal Year 2002

INTRODUCTION

This performance plan for fiscal year 2002 (FY02) contains goals and performance measures that we will use to focus our operations and evaluate their success. It describes significant steps that the Office of Inspector General (OIG) at the National Science Foundation (NSF) will take to realize its strategic goals:

*During FY02,
we will
strengthen our
contributions
and ensure that
our work
focuses on
priority agency
issues.*

- Promoting NSF efficiency and effectiveness
- Safeguarding the integrity of NSF programs and resources
- Using OIG resources effectively and efficiently

Our success is directly related to how well NSF accomplishes its programmatic responsibilities. Consequently, during FY02, we will ensure that our work focuses on priority agency issues and that we provide useful, timely feedback to agency managers, the National Science Board (NSB), and the Congress. This plan explains how we will strengthen our contributions during the next fiscal year.

The main purpose of a performance plan is to guide our activities for the year. We are committed to integrating this plan into our on-going management system, reviewing it quarterly, assessing progress, making adjustments as needed, and achieving our FY02 goals.

Goal 1

Promote NSF Efficiency and Effectiveness

- Increase OIG Impact on NSF's Effectiveness and Efficiency

In recent years, we have identified and recommended improvements to address a variety of issues that, despite our efforts, continue to pose problems for NSF. Recognizing that we play an advisory role and have limited control over how issues are ultimately resolved, we believe we can take steps to make our work achieve better results for NSF. The following performance measures and strategies describe the steps we will take in FY02 to increase our impact on NSF effectiveness and efficiency.

How We Will Measure Progress

Performance will be measured through a series of performance indicators intended to ensure that we have more impact.

Goal 1 Performance Measures	
	<i>Data Source(s)</i>
1.1 OIG activities and products address substantive agency and federal issues.	Survey and Analysis
1.2 Outreach successfully supports NSF efforts to inform its awardee community about the financial/compliance standards that matter for effectiveness and efficiency.	Survey and Analysis
1.3 Information is available to NSF management in time to address issues	Survey and Analysis
1.4 Products are clear, concise and factual and convey realistic recommendations that will correct the problems identified	Survey and Analysis

Goal 1 - STRATEGIES AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

In order to achieve this goal, we plan to accomplish the following specific strategies and actions:

1. **Identify and implement approaches to improve audit product quality and timeliness.**

- *Implement team-based auditing approach on high-risk audits.*
- *Develop audit working paper quality standards.*
- *Develop audit report quality standards.*
- *Develop audit guide for contract auditors.*
- *Develop automated work-in-process tracking system.*
- *Conduct a study of audit timeliness issues and identify any corrective actions.*
- *Ensure timely assessment of investigative allegations arising out of audits.*

We will use the following indicators for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Use of team-based audits.
- Completion of audit working paper quality standards.
- Completion of audit report quality standards.
- Completion of guide for contract auditors.
- Completion of automated work-in-process tracking system.
- Completion of study of audit timeliness.

2. **Enhance communication and collaboration between audit and investigation, ensuring that multi-disciplinary approaches are used, where appropriate, to address NSF issues.**

- *Share information about audit and investigative activities at all-staff meetings.*
- *Award and administer contract for the provision of audit services in support of investigative activities.*
- *Develop indicators for deciding when it makes sense to use multi-disciplinary resources on audit and investigative assignments.*
- *Provide opportunities for cross-cutting training for auditors, investigators, and other OIG staff.*
- *Implement Grant Fraud Indicators pilot program.*
- *Provide timely information exchange and referrals between the audit and investigation units.*

We will use the following indicators for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Number of presentations by auditors and investigators at all-staff meetings.
- Completion of the contract for audit services to support investigations.
- Completion of indicators for multi-disciplinary activities.
- Completion of FY 2002 cross-cutting training in OIG.
- Implementation of the Grant Fraud Indicators pilot program.
- Assessment of information exchanges and referrals between the audit and investigation units.

3. Strengthen our focus by refining approaches for selecting work and setting priorities.

- *Continue to enhance audit planning processes to assess audit risk and focus on substantive agency and Federal issues by developing and formalizing an audit planning strategy.*
- *Assign audit staff to program areas to develop agency expertise.*
- *Conduct historical trend analysis of audit findings*
- *Conduct agency funding analysis by program and grantee institution to assist in setting audit priorities.*
- *Develop permanent files of programmatic and audit areas*

We will use the following indicators for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Completion of an audit plan.
- Completion of audit staff assignments to program areas.
- Completion of historical trend analysis of audit findings.
- Completion of agency funding analysis.
- Development of permanent files of programmatic and audit areas.

4. Perform outreach regarding effectiveness and efficiency issues.

- *Develop an OIG outreach plan to support NSF's efforts to inform the awardee community about the financial and compliance standards that matter for efficiency and effectiveness.*

We will use the following indicator for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Completion of an Outreach Plan for efficiency and effectiveness matters.

Goal 2

Safeguard the Integrity of NSF Programs and Resources

- Enhance ability to detect and address improper, inappropriate, or illegal activities
- Balance reactive (investigative) and proactive (outreach, audit, and reviews) approaches in order to achieve maximum preventive effect

For the public to maintain confidence in government-funded science, the scientific community must exhibit a high level of integrity. OIG activities help keep NSF activities free from integrity abuses and promote sensitivity to ethics in science.

For the public to maintain confidence in government-funded science, the scientific community must exhibit a high level of integrity in the expenditure of public funds and the conduct of science. Moreover, science itself cannot function effectively if scientists are not able to rely on their colleagues to produce and represent their results with integrity. Integrity problems, when they occur, must be fairly and responsibly addressed. OIG activities promote sensitivity to ethics in science and help NSF reduce abuses such as plagiarism, fabrication and falsification of data, and misuse of government funds. The following performance measures and strategies describe the steps we will take in FY02 to safeguard the integrity of NSF programs and resources.

How We Will Measure Progress

Performance for this goal will be measured through a series of performance indicators intended to assess how well we are safeguarding integrity of programs and resources.

Goal 2 Performance Measures	
	Data Source(s)
2.1 Integrity issues that may require action are identified and addressed and insignificant issues are identified and closed	Survey and Analysis
2.2 Allegations are investigated in a timely manner	Analysis
2.3 Investigative outputs are clear, concise and factual and convey analytical rigor and specific, realistic recommendations	Survey and Analysis
2.4 Outreach successfully informs people about OIG matters and what to do about their concerns and promotes research standards and associated education	Survey and Analysis

Goal 2 - STRATEGIES AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

In order to achieve this goal, we plan to accomplish the following specific strategies and actions:

1. Identify ways to improve investigative product quality and timeliness.

- *Ensure consistency of investigative reports within each of the Investigative sections.*
- *Define the minimal contents and structure of an Administrative or Civil/Criminal Investigative Report.*
- *Complete rewriting the Investigative Manual.*
- *Implement Milestones and develop target timelines.*
- *Define quality product.*

We will use the following indicators for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Assessment of investigative report consistency.
- Definition of the contents and structure of investigative reports.
- Completion of Investigative Manual rewriting.
- Implementation of milestones within targeted timelines.
- Definition of quality for investigative products.

2. Enhance outreach effectiveness.

- *Revise the Outreach Plan to incorporate the plan of the audit office.*
- *Develop a Civil/Criminal Investigations companion brochure.*
- *Monitor and assess the effectiveness of outreach on case processing time, priorities, and allegation assessment.*
- *Participate in NSF New Employee orientation.*
- *Revise Program Management Seminar materials.*

We will use the following indicators for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Incorporation of audit participation in the OIG Outreach Plan.
- Completion of brochure on Civil/Criminal Investigations.
- Assessment of the effectiveness of outreach activities.
- Participation in NSF's orientation for new employees.
- Revision of materials for Program Management Seminars.

3. Enhance communication and collaboration between audit and investigation, ensuring that multi-disciplinary approaches are used, where appropriate, to address NSF issues.

- *Share information about audit and investigative activities at all-staff meetings.*
- *Award and administer contract for the provision of audit services in support of investigative activities.*
- *Develop indicators for deciding when it makes sense to use multi-disciplinary resources on audit and investigative assignments.*
- *Provide opportunities for cross-cutting training for auditors, investigators, and other OIG staff.*
- *Implement Grant Fraud Indicators pilot program.*
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We will use the following indicators for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Number of presentations by auditors and investigators at all-staff meetings.
- Completion of the contract for audit services to support investigations.
- Completion of indicators for multi-disciplinary activities.
- Completion of FY 2002 cross-cutting training in OIG.
- Completion of the Grant Fraud Indicators pilot program.
- Assessment of information exchanges and referrals between the audit and investigation units.

Goal 3

Utilize OIG Resources Effectively and Efficiently

Our success depends on our ability to pull together as an organizational unit and focus our efforts on issues important to NSF.

- Continue to strengthen our management and planning tools and techniques
- Fully develop, plan for, and utilize OIG personnel
- Ensure that managers and staff have tools and resources necessary to accomplish their duties and responsibilities
- Initiate and participate in collaborative efforts with other organizations that have shared interests
- Enhance and strengthen OIG internal communication

Our success depends on our ability to pull together as an organizational unit, overcome internal divisions, develop an effective infrastructure for management, draw on resources external to our own organization, and focus our efforts on issues important to NSF. We have a diverse and talented workforce whose backgrounds and skills range beyond what one would find in a typical OIG. To effectively capitalize on our internal diversity, we must develop a common understanding of office priorities and constructive ways of dealing with our differences. The following measures and strategies address these issues.

How We Will Measure Progress

Performance for this goal will be measured through a series of performance indicators intended to assess how well we are safeguarding integrity of programs and resources.

Goal 3 Performance Measures	
	Data Source(s)
3.1 Assessments to determine if we are effectively and efficiently utilizing OIG resources	Survey and Analysis
3.2 Adequacy of management and planning tools and techniques	Survey and Analysis
3.3 Effectiveness of personnel recruitment, retention, development, planning, and utilization	Survey and Analysis
3.4 Effectiveness of OIG internal communication	Survey and Analysis

Goal 3 - STRATEGIES AND ASSOCIATED ACTIONS

In order to achieve this goal, we plan to accomplish the following specific strategies and actions:

1. Better utilize professional expertise and talents of all OIG staff.

- *Conduct survey of OIG staff to obtain their views on the effectiveness of (1) OIG use of its resources in personnel, equipment, technology and contracting, (2) management planning, policies, and procedures, (3) internal cooperation and communications, and (4) OIG impact on NSF.*
- *Analyze survey results and develop corrective actions for the problems identified.*
- *Increase the use of the team approach in OIG activities.*
- *Develop an integrated MIS within the OIG.*
- *Develop OIG policies and procedures as needed.*
- *Ensure that all appropriate OIG activities and experiences are shared at all-staff meetings.*

We will use the following indicators for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Completion of survey of OIG staff.
- Development of corrective actions based on survey results.
- Assessment of the use of the team approach in OIG activities.
- Implementation of an integrated MIS.
- Development of policies and procedures.
- Assessment of OIG presentations at all-staff meetings.

2. Address recruiting and retention issues.

- *Use survey results and other information to analyze OIG skill mix and determine whether it will meet the priority needs of the office in the future.*
- *Focus recruiting efforts on correcting any skill deficiencies identified.*
- *Assess the adequacy of existing NSF personnel services to the OIG and take steps to correct any problems.*
- *Develop a system for tracking retention rates, turnover, and length of service.*
- *Evaluate the use of telecommuting in OIG.*

We will use the following indicators for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Analysis of OIG skill mix and future needs.
- Assessment of recruiting efforts.
- Assessment of personnel services support and corrective measures.
- Development of a personnel retention tracking system.
- Assessment of telecommuting in OIG.

3. Strengthen effectiveness of and investment in staff development and training.

- *Develop an office-wide process for individual development plans.*
- *Provide OIG training in NSF programs and procedures, professional skills, and other subjects that have wide application within the office.*
- *Ensure that the requirements of the existing training policy are met by all OIG staff.*
- *Identify core competencies for staff by grade level/position.*

We will use the following indicators for assessing progress in implementing this strategy:

- Implementation of individual development plans.
- Implementation of OIG training and assessment of compliance with training policy.
- Identification of staff core competencies.